

57. (New) The system of Claim 56, wherein said guide member includes
- (i) an upper opening alignable with any one of said outlet regions for receiving reagent dispensed therefrom;
  - (ii) a lower opening, smaller than said upper opening, through which dispensed reagent may egress in route to said holding area; and
  - (iii) a conical portion between said upper and lower openings.

#### **REMARKS**

By this response and amendment, Claims 1 and 14 have been elected, new Claims 34-57 have been added and Claims 25, 26, and 29-31 have been canceled without prejudice.

#### **RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT**

Applicants hereby elect the claims of Group I (Claims 1 and 14), with traverse. Please note that Claim 14 was not canceled in the Preliminary Amendment filed September 18, 2001 and should be included in the claims of Group I.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Pursuant to a telephone conference of January 8, 2003 with Examiner Bex, Applicants are assuming that the Supplemental Preliminary Amendment filed on December 4, 2002 was not entered due to the Restriction Requirement dated

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November 15, 2002. Therefore, Applicants are submitting Claims 34-57 from that previous Supplemental Preliminary Amendment that are directed to Group I. We will also be filing concurrently herewith a Request for Refund based on the Supplemental Preliminary Amendment filed on December 4, 2002.

Should the Examiner have any further questions regarding the election, the Examiner is courteously requested to contact the undersigned at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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**ATTACHMENT FOR CLAIM AMENDMENTS**

The following is a marked up version of each amended claim in which underlines indicates insertions and brackets indicate deletions:

1. (Twice Amended) A system for storing and dispensing a plurality of reagents, comprising:

an addressable array of reagent dispensers;

a gate mechanism at a lower outlet region of each dispenser, each gate mechanism being independently operable between (i) an open condition permitting passage of a respective reagent through said outlet region, and (ii) a closed condition whereat such passage is blocked;

a first support disposed below said array;

a second support mounted on said first [array] support, said second support having a holding area for receiving a plurality of receptacles;

wherein (i) said first support is variably positionable, permitting placement of a fixed target region thereof directly under any selected one of said dispensers in said array, and (ii) said second support is variably positionable, permitting placement of any selected target site of said holding area directly over said fixed target region.